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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR T/ISN, NEA/IR, AND NEA/MAG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/08/2019  
TAGS: [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [TS](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: SENIOR TUNISIANS ON IRAN

Classified by Ambassador Gordon Gray for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Ambassador discussed the latest diplomatic developments on Iran with Tunisian Prime Minister Ghannouchi on October 7 and with Minister of State Abdelaziz Ben Dhia, a special advisor to President Ben Ali, on October 8. With each, the Ambassador reviewed the outcome of the October 1 talks and, drawing on the points conveyed reftel, requested Tunisia's continued support for a dual-track approach toward Iran - pursuing diplomacy backed by a credible threat of sanctions.

¶2. (C) The Prime Minister responded that Tunisia's policy was guided by two principles: International legality and sustained diplomacy. Ben Dhia elaborated further, stating that Tunisia had no problem with Iran's pursuit of a civil nuclear energy capability, but Iran's pursuit of military applications for nuclear technology would be unacceptable. Ben Dhia thought the Iranians "historically difficult to deal with," but declined to engage on the possibility of applying increased international sanctions, should conditions warrant.

GRAY